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"LUCKS" ASSOCIATED WITH ART OBJECTS.

By LLEWELLYNN JEWITT, F.S.A.



WITHOUT even for a moment entering into the general subject of Fairy Lore or Fairy Gifts—tempting and fascinating though that subject undoubtedly is—I purpose in this brief article to call attention to some rare works of early Art, the possession of which, according to popular belief, insures to their owners, so long as they remain intact, good luck in their families, undertakings, and estates. In different ages and in different localities these "Lucks," as they are called, have found their mysterious way into the possession of families more or less noted, and have been treasured and handed down with religious, or rather superstitious, care from generation to generation; and the beliefs, the legends, the traditions, and the rhymes by which they are surrounded, however wild and impossible they may be, are believed in with a steadfastness of faith worthy a better cause.

"There was a king and queene of Phairie," says our royal James in his "Dæmonology," "that had a jolly court and traine; they had a teynd and duetie as it were of all goodes; they naturally rode and went, eate and dranke, and did all other actions like natural men and women. Witches have been transported with the Phairie to a hill, which opening, they went in, and there saw a Fairie Queene, who being now lighter gave them a stone that had sundrie vertues,"—and not only so, but cups of rare value, goblets of wondrous make and of choicest material, or cups of crystal and glass that were beyond human skill to make or human calculations: to over-estimate. These were supposed to possess marvellous powers both for good and evil, and, where fear or awe had not prevented their acceptance, were carefully retained as heirlooms. "One day these fairies," says Moses Pott, "gave my sister Mary a silver cup, which held about a quart, bidding her to give it to my mother, but my mother would not accept of it;" and to another they gave a gift of a cup, and after having themselves fed the recipient with sweet fairy cakes, gave her ointments and salves to heal diseases with, and a power to do good for herself and others so long as she retained the cup perfect as received by her.

The most charming, however, of all the fairy stories of luck-attending objects is that of the "Luck of Edenhall," to which I propose first of all to draw attention.

Cumberland is undoubtedly the "luckiest" of all English counties, for within its confines no less than three so-called "Lucks"—the first, that of Edenhall, having a fairy origin; the second, that of Muncaster, being purely historical; and the third, that of Burrell Green, seeming to have no foundation beyond simple tradition—are carefully preserved, and, each having its own peculiar story, are held to be beyond measure in interest, and far above price in literal value.

Undoubtedly of all the traditional stories, superstitious beliefs, and fairy-lore tales attached to the histories of any of the grand old English families, the most pleasing in incident, venerable in age, poetical in conception, and well supported and sustained by actual circumstance, that of the "LUCK OF EDENHALL," connected with the famous historical family of Musgrave, stands pre-eminent not only for its beauty and originality, or the unique excellence of the cup itself as an early work of Art, but for the immense stake that is believed to rest on its safe keeping. In most cases, as I have elsewhere written, the stories attaching to old families and homes have no tangible object connected with them. They are mere old-world tales that have passed current for generations, and have had their original foundation in some dark deed or other "woful circumstance" associated with the forebears of the line, but they have nothing to show as a tenure by which they may be held and perpetuated. Not so with the Edenhall tradition: its mission is the preservation of a choice object of ancient Art, and the perpetually handing of it

down, age after age, in the same family, by the sure means of nurturing the thought that the welfare and well-being—the "Luck" in fact—of that family rests and depends on its safety. It would be difficult indeed to find a surer or more effectual means of securing the safety of any precious heirloom than that of attaching to it a religious belief that, should harm come to it, the downfall of its possessors would inevitably follow; and doubtless, to some extent, it is the superstitious belief in the fairy prophecy that has "held its own" for so many ages, and has taken such fast hold of the minds of sire and son during that time, and still, it is to be hoped, lingers at the present day, that the Edenhall cup is now, at the hour in which I write, as safe as it was when it first came from the hands of its maker.

The fragile cup—the "Luck of Edenhall"—on the safe preservation of which the "luck" of the family is by this popular tradition said to depend—is one of the finest existing examples of ancient glass, and its preservation is matter of sincere congratulation with all lovers of the antique. It is of very early date, and in form differs from most glass drinking



The "Luck of Edenhall."

cups that are preserved to us. In size it is about six inches in height, four inches in diameter at the mouth, and two inches in diameter at the foot. It is of clear glass, with the slightest possible tinge of amber, and is exquisitely ornamented in arabesque pattern with enamel and gold. Its shape is extremely elegant and well proportioned, the flow of its outline possessing an ease and grace not always apparent either in old or modern Art productions. It partakes much of the form of a Chinese beaker—wide at the mouth, curving inwards at the sides, and narrow at the foot. The pattern is particularly rich and effective. It is in gold and enamel, thickly laid on upon the surface, the colours being red, blue, green, and white. It is different in many of its characteristics from other remaining examples of ancient glass.

The "Luck"—i.e. this exquisite and priceless glass—is preserved in a marvellously fine mediæval *cuir bouilli* case, made especially for its reception and safe keeping. This case, which is of the same form as the glass, is of wood, and retains its original green lining. It is covered with *cuir bouilli*, elaborately and beautifully pressed or carved in the usual manner with upright bands of scroll-work and trefoil foliage and other ornaments, while the lid, which still fastens with its original leather thongs, has an encircling border around its curved rim, and the top filled

to almost its entire size with the sacred monogram *ih̄c* exquisitely formed in the leather. The case is undoubtedly one of the very finest, most interesting, and most delicately executed examples of *cuir bouilli* that has yet come under my notice, and is a choice and unique example of mediæval Art. The material, of course, is not unusual for cases for cups, and for scabbards, shields, and portions of armour, but I know no example that in beauty and intricacy of design, elaborate tooling, or extreme delicacy of treatment equals the case that enshrines the priceless Art treasure of which I have spoken.

The legend, tradition, fairy story, or what you will, connected with this cup, and which throws such a halo of interest not only around the Art object itself, but the home and family of its right worthy owner, is simply this—that in ages now long gone by one of the family or their retainers (the butler, it is popularly said) went one night, as was usual, to fetch water from St. Cuthbert's Well, close by the mansion—a "Holy Well" that still remains there, and gives a never-failing supply of the purest water—and on approaching, saw near the well a "glorious company" of fairies with their queen in their midst, dancing, and "holding high court and revellry" on the greensward. Disturbed and confused at his approach, they began hurriedly to disperse, when he, seeing their regal goblet left standing by the well, seized it and held it fast. Enraged at this "rape of the cup," the "little people" demanded its return, and menacingly endeavoured to retake it from his grasp. In this they were unsuccessful; the man retained his prize, and then the queen, in her rage and vexation, uttered the ominous and prophetic words—

"Should the cup e'er break or fall,
Farewell the Luck of Edenhall."

As these prophetic words, clearly and shrilly emphasized, fell on his ear in the still night air, the whole company disappeared, and the man returned to the mansion bearing his captured treasure; and from that moment to the present it has there been preserved with religious care, and with a due reverence to the solemnity of the fairy queen's malediction.

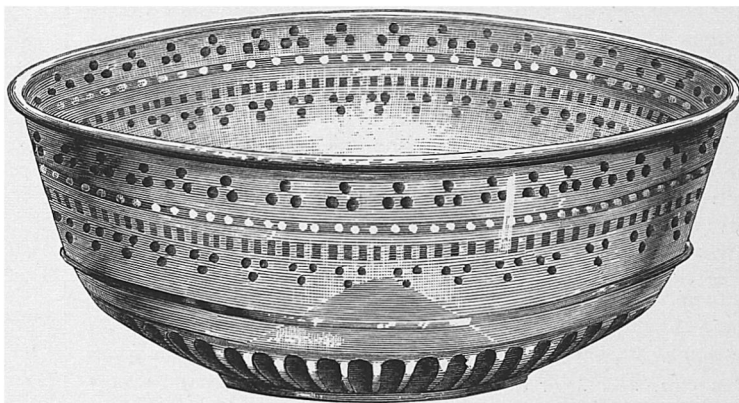
This sweetly pretty tradition, which from generation to generation has been handed down from time immemorial, has formed the theme of many ballads, songs, and stories, which have more or less departed from its original simplicity, and given colouring after colouring to its supposed incidents. One of the earliest metrical allusions to the cup is the famous ballad by the profligate Duke of Wharton (on the model of "Chevy Chase"), entitled "Upon a remarkable Drinking Match held at Sir Christopher Musgrave's," * which begins—

"God prosper long from being broke
The Luck of Edenhall!
A doleful drinking bout I sing,
There, lately, did befall."

Uhland, the German, seized on the legend as one after his own heart, but so utterly transformed it as to destroy its connection with the relic itself. His lines were translated by Longfellow, with the prefix of a note stating that the cup "is still preserved at Eden Hall, and is not so entirely broken as the ballad describes"—a statement ludicrously absurd, for the cup is at the present moment in which I write as perfect and as free from injury, or even blemish, as it was on the first day of its existence, now several centuries back, when it left the hands of its clever and gifted maker. But it has had its narrow escapes—notably when the wild, reckless, but highly gifted Duke of Wharton, to whom I have alluded above, having drained its contents in drinking the health of its noble owner, and success and perpetuity to his race, inadvertently let it slip from his hand. The "Luck" was, however, as "luck would have it," instantly caught by the wary butler who had brought the draught, and thus saved from destruction.

* This ballad, and others founded on the "Luck of Edenhall," appear in the *Reliquary*, vol. xix.

The "Luck of Edenhall," as of course the drinking glass is called, is shown, with case, in the preceding engraving. The sacred monogram of *ih̄c* on the lid of the case has caused much speculation among writers as to its origin, some having supposed from this that the glass was a chalice "used as such at a time when it was unsafe to have these vessels made of costlier metals, on account of the predatory habits which prevailed on the borders," and others forming equally erroneous views. In the absence of all record as to the true history, or as to the time when the treasure first came into the hands of the Musgraves or their alliances, it is difficult to form a correct conclusion, but I am clearly of opinion that the glass is of Oriental (Saracenic) make, certainly not Venetian, as has been stated by some, and the probability is that it was brought back as a trophy from the Holy Wars by one of the Musgrave knights, and that the case—certainly of considerably later date than the glass itself—was afterwards made for its preservation, and the Christian monogram properly, wisely, and most appropriately added to symbolize the occasion of the bringing of the trophy. The ornamentation of the glass is purely Oriental; its age, so far as one is able to judge, corresponds with the period of the latter Crusades; and the whole matter seems sufficient to warrant me in assigning the "Luck" to that period. The events of the Holy Wars, too, were the most prolific of all themes in the Middle Ages for wild romance and fabulous story, which were invested



The "Luck of Muncaster."

with additional interest by surrounding them with such a halo of superstition and romance as would best take hold of the popular mind. Thus the legend of the fairy origin of the "Luck" would have arisen, and so, having once become part and parcel of popular belief, would remain current, as it has done, to our own day. Long may it continue so!

The "LUCK OF MUNCASTER," for particulars of which I am indebted to its noble owner, the Right Hon. Lord Muncaster, is also of glass, but of different period and form, and owes its name and interest to a purely historical circumstance. This remarkably curious, and I believe unique, glass bowl is five inches and five-eighths in diameter at the top, and two and a quarter inches in height. It is formed of glass of a greenish hue, with simple ornamentation in gold and enamel. The two upper rows of dots, forming, as it were, a series of trefoils, as shown in the engraving, are of a pale dull lilac-coloured enamel on the glass itself; the next band is a row of white enamel spots upon a gold ground, with a delicate gold line above and below; next a band or line composed of small gold squares; and the next the same as the first, but reversed, while the lower part is roughly ornamented on the glass itself, and has almost a bronzed appearance.

This curious and highly interesting relic was, according to the family tradition, given to the direct ancestor of Lord Muncaster, Sir John Pennington, by King Henry VI., on leaving Muncaster after the battle of Hexham or of Towton. Sir John was a staunch adherent of the unfortunate monarch, whom he sheltered at Muncaster Castle on his flight from the Yorkists. It has been stated by Mr. White that the King was twice there—first "in 1461,

when, accompanied by his Queen and their young son, with the Dukes of Exeter and Somerset, he fled with great precipitation from Scotland; and, second, after the battle of Hexham, which was fought on the 15th of May, 1463. On his defeat at Hexham, some friends of the fugitive king took him under their protection and conveyed him into Lancashire. During the time he



King Henry VI. presenting the "Luck of Muncaster."

remained in concealment, which was about twelve months, the King visited Muncaster. On this occasion the royal visit appears to have been attended with very little of regal pomp or ceremony. Henry having made his way into Cumberland, with only one companion, arrived at Irton Hall soon after midnight; but his quality being unknown, or the inmates afraid to receive him, he was denied admittance. He then passed over the mountains towards Muncaster, where he was accidentally met by some shepherds at three o'clock in the morning, and was conducted by them to Muncaster Castle. The spot where the meeting took place is still indicated by a tall steeple-like monument on an eminence at some distance from the Castle." In reference to this Lord Muncaster informs me that according to the family tradition the King was only *once*, not twice, at Muncaster Castle; this was after the battle of Hexham or Towton, when he came as a fugitive, and of course devoid of all regal state.

The remembrance of the visit of the King is still retained at Muncaster, in addition to the tradition of the "Luck," by a bedroom being called "Henry VI.'s Room," or the "King's Room," and is said to have been the one he occupied and "was concealed in at the time he was flying from his enemies, in 1461, when Sir John Pennington, the then possessor of Muncaster, gave a secret reception." "The posts of the bed in which he slept," continues Roby, "which are of handsome carved oak, are also in the same room in good preservation." On this point, not having seen these supposed remains, I express no opinion. The Castle was much altered and restored by Mr. Salvin, but Lord Muncaster informs me that much of the old building still remains, particularly the corridor in which "Henry VI.'s Room" is situated, and a tower in which were found (when alterations were made a century ago) Roman bricks and a gold coin of Theodosius. "The bed-posts," his lordship adds, "are undoubtedly old, and probably of the date of Henry VI."

On leaving Muncaster Castle the monarch is said to have given this precious relic into the hands of Sir John Pennington, saying to him, "Your family shall prosper so long as they preserve this glass unbroken." "The benediction attached to its security being then uppermost in the recollection of the family, it was considered essential to the prosperity of their house at the time of the usurpation that the Luck of Muncaster should be deposited in a safe place; it was consequently buried till the cessation of hostilities had rendered all further care and concealment unnecessary. Unfortunately, however, the person commissioned to disinter this precious jewel let the box fall in which it was locked up, which so alarmed the then existing members of the family

that they could not muster courage enough to satisfy their apprehensions. It therefore (according to the traditionary story still preserved in the family) remained unopened for more than forty years, at the expiration of which period a Pennington, more hardy or more courageous than his predecessors, unlocked the casket, and exultingly proclaimed the safety of the Luck."

In Roby's "Traditions" is a metrical version of the story, not very cleverly put together, and entirely different in its incidents from the tradition. In it the King is made to say to Sir John Pennington—

"But take this cup—'tis a hallowed thing
Which holy men have blessed;
In the church of the Holy Sepulchre
This crystal once did rest;
And many a martyr, and many a saint,
Around its brim have sate;
No water that e'er its lips have touched
But is hallowed and consecrate.

'Tis thine, Sir John; not an empire's worth,
Nor wealth of Ind could buy
The like, for never was jewel seen
Of such wondrous potency.
It shall bless thy bed, it shall bless thy board,
They shall prosper by this token;
In Muncaster Castle good luck shall be
Till the charmed cup is broken!"

Sir John he bent him on his knee,
And the king's word ne'er did err,
For the cup is called to this blessed hour,
'The Luck of Muncaster.'

Roby's ballad then makes it that in the border wars Sir John, fearing for the safety of the "Luck," sent his "kinsman good at need," "Sir William of Liddislee," to Muncaster to his lady to—

"... bid her, rather than house or land
Take heed of that cup of grace,
Which King Henry gave to our ancestor,
The 'Luck' of our noble race.
Bid her bury it deep at dead of night
That no eye its hiding see,"—

but he, traitorous knight as he was, got the cup on pretence of burying it, and then, with the intention of destroying the "luck" of the house, threw down the casket and fled! Years after, as



The "Luck of Burrell Green."

the sequel of the ballad recounts, the head of the family, having gone a wooing to "Lonsdale's Lady Margaret" at Lowther, was rejected by that lady with contumely, who twitted him with the fact that the "Luck" was broken, and, as he returned moodily homewards, he was met by a sprite—an "elfin dwarf" or "goblin"—who uttered the prophetic words, "There's a key in Muncaster

Castle can break that maiden's heart in twain." Returning to his castle—

"He kicked the casket o'er and o'er
With rage and contumely;
When lo! a tinkling sound was heard—
Down dropped a glittering key.
He took the key, and he turned the lock,
And he opened the casket wide.
The holy cup lay glistening there,
And he kissed that blessed token,
For its matchless form unharmed lay,
The 'Luck' had ne'er been broken!"

Nor has it down to the present hour. It rests safely in Muncaster Castle, guarded with the religious care so eminently due to so fragile and so choice a relic, and only exhumed from its hiding-place in the "Strong Room" on special occasions, one of these occasions being that on which my dear friend Jacob Thompson, the eminent painter, had it placed before him on a recent visit made to the grand old castle for the purpose of making the drawing that illustrates my present notice, and which so exquisitely represents its manifold beauties. To him I am greatly indebted for the drawing by which I am thus able, for the first time, to offer to the antiquarian and Art world an engraving of this inestimable relic.

In this delicate and fragile bowl, rich in its associations, and surrounded by a halo of interest far brighter and more lasting than that attached to many remains—fresh as it once was from the hands of royalty; hallowed by age and rendered superlatively interesting by a blending together of historical incident and traditional lore—in this invaluable vessel all the members of the Pennington family, as I am informed by their noble head, the present Lord Muncaster, have been christened, and thus their "Luck" has been "luckily" preserved from the hour of the gift to that in which I write.

I am informed by Lord Muncaster that until recently a painting was preserved in the castle which represented "King Henry VI. giving to Sir John Pennington, on his leaving the Castle in 1461, the Luck of Muncaster." This painting, his lordship tells me, was, very much to his regret, destroyed during some alterations in the building. A small painting on panel is, however, still preserved in the castle, which represents the King (Henry VI.) in regal costume, holding the "Luck" in his

left hand. It is rudely drawn, but possessed of special interest: a rough sketch of it is given on the preceding page.

A third "Luck," to which, however, I can but very briefly here refer, is that known as the "LUCK OF BURRELL GREEN," but is totally different in its own character and in that of its traditionary story from either of the others. The legend connected with this relic is obscure and very vague in most of its particulars. It is said that the "Luck" was given to an ancestor of the family "in the olden time" by a fairy or "hob-i'th-hurst" to whom kindness had been shown—or, according to another version, a witch or soothsayer, with a strict injunction that it should never be parted with "for love or money," or be allowed to pass out of the family, and that this injunction was emphasized by the uttering, in prophetic tones, of the words—

"If this dish be sold or gi'en [given],
Farewell the luck of Burrell Green."

This couplet is evidently a tolerably modern paraphrase on the well-known lines of the Luck of Edenhall. This curious relic belongs to Mr. Lamb, of Great Salkeld, in Cumberland, in whose family it has been carefully preserved for some generations, and to whom I am indebted for permission to engrave it. It is of brass, circular in form, and bears around its central ornament an almost illegible inscription as follows—

Mary . Mother . Of . Jesus . Saviour . Of . Men

—in old English characters; and in another circle, outside this one, is the "Luck" inscription, in very much more modern lettering:—

IF THIS DISH BE SOLD OR GI'EN . FAREWELL THE LUCK OF
BURRELL GREEN.

The diameter of this brazen dish is sixteen and a quarter inches, and its depth one and a half inches. Its form and device will be best understood by the accompanying engraving from a drawing specially made for me by my friend Jacob Thompson. It is the first time this interesting object has been engraved, and it is eminently fitting that it, as an early example of Art metal-work, and the Muncaster relic in glass, should first be given to the public, along with the "Luck of Edenhall," through the medium of the *Art Journal*.

OUR STEEL ENGRAVINGS.

KENTISH HOP-GARDENS.

C. G. LAWSON, Painter.

J. SADDLER, Engraver.



ENT has not inaptly been termed the "Garden of England:" poets and prose writers have combined to praise its fertility, its rich picturesque scenery, and its historic associations. Douglas Jerrold says: "We feel a something old, strong, stubborn, hearty; a something for the intense meaning of which we have no other word than 'English,' rising about us from every road in Kent." And Michael Drayton, the poet (1563–1631), in his famous work "Polyolbion," which is a description of Kent, wrote:—

"... O famous Kent!
What county hath this isle that can compare with thee?

Mr. Lawson's large and noble picture formed, among the landscapes, one of the great attractions of the Grosvenor Gallery last season, where it most deservedly occupied a very prominent position in the principal room. The scene is laid in the neighbourhood of Wrotham, a district particularly distinguished for its hop-gardens, which lie chiefly on and under the chalk-hills running between Bromley and Rochester. The picture is not an actual transcript from any one point in particular, but is a representative composi-

tion of most of the characteristics of many portions of the county of Kent. The time of year presented is September, when, if the season has been favourable, the hop-flowers are fully ripe and ready for the "pickers." The gardens then offer a most beautiful and attractive sight, and Mr. Lawson has here done full justice to a scene of nature rich and luxuriant, where the hops are hanging in abundant and graceful festoons from the poles round which the vine clings. The numerous small circular buildings with roofs crowned with a kind of vane are the oasts, or kilns for drying the hops when gathered; these kilns are mostly heated by flues. The machine in the foreground of the picture, that bears a strong resemblance to a plough, is simply an instrument for clearing the weeds from the alleys between hop rows, which should always be kept clean.

PRAYER IN THE FOREST.

H. SALANTIN, Painter.

E. FORBERG, Engraver.

THE painter of this picture, Mr. Salantin, belongs to the Düsseldorf school of artists, though his name is French; he studied, we believe, under Vautier. There is nothing novel in the subject of this picture, which artists in Continental countries, where facilities for roadside devotion meet the wayfarer in every direction, very frequently adopt. The scene as here presented is certainly picturesque—an appropriate architectural composition that looks